

Sydney Conservatorium of Music



Postgraduate Audition Guide 2024



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Postgraduate Audition Guide

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Left to right: aerial view of a rehearsal, student playing trumpet

The audition registration process

Audition information and how to apply

Our postgraduate coursework degrees in performance are designed to prepare you for the music profession. All of the degrees have a strong emphasis on perfecting your professional performance skills. As part of your application, you must register for your audition via the SCM's official audition portal: **Acceptd**.

Application process

1. apply directly to the University of Sydney – further information can be found [here](#)
2. register for your audition/interview in **Acceptd**
3. follow the specific requirements in this guide to prepare your audition program.

When you have finished your application, make sure you check your email for confirmation of the audition and interview times. For further information on applying for your chosen degree, please see [here](#).

Audition registration

You will be asked to nominate the degree for which you are applying as well as your Program Area. Refer to **Table 1** below to check the course your Program Area is offered in.

Entry into a Sydney Conservatorium of Music (SCM) coursework performance degree requires a successful audition. To be considered for a place in a Master of Music Studies or Graduate Diploma, you must register for your audition via our official audition portal: Acceptd. Please note that you may also need to meet other requirements, such as sight-reading or attending an interview.

When to register

Audition registration opens in Acceptd in April and usually closes in September for the following year's intake. Auditions are held in July and September, and there may be an additional round in December. You choose which round you would like to participate in – please see below for audition dates.

Where to audition

Live auditions are held at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music
1 Conservatorium Rd, Sydney
(just off Macquarie Street – look for the castle)

Course Information

Table 1: Programs, audition type, and degree information

Our postgraduate coursework degrees are designed to prepare you for the music profession, with a strong emphasis on perfecting your professional performance skills.

The Sydney Conservatorium offers the following postgraduate coursework options:

- Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)
- Master of Music Studies (Performance)
- Master of Music Studies (Opera Performance)

Table 1: Programs, audition type, and degree information

| Program Area | Audition Type | M Music Studies (Performance) *CRICOS code: 058373C | G Dip Music (Performance) *CRICOS code: 058373C | M Music Studies (Opera Performance) *CRICOS code: 058373C |
|--|----------------------|--|--|--|
| Orchestral Instrument [▲] | audition | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ |
| Non-Orchestral Instrument [◆] | audition | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ |
| Jazz Performance | audition | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ |
| Opera Performance | audition + interview | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ |

M = Master of, G Dip = Graduate Diploma in

**CRICOS = Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students

✓ program is available in this course

✗ program is not available in this course

[▲] Classical: Bassoon, Cello, Clarinet, Double Bass, Euphonium, Harp, Horn, Oboe, Percussion, Trombone, Trumpet, Tuba, Viola, Violin

[◆] Chinese Instrumental Performance, Guitar, Historical Performance, Organ, Piano (Classical), Saxophone, Voice (Classical)

Audition rounds and deadlines

Table 2: Audition rounds and deadlines



Table 2: Audition and application dates

| Audition Round | Semester intake | Registration deadline |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Round 1: 8 to 12 Jul 2024 <i>(excluding Opera offered in round 2 only)</i> | semester 2 2024, semester 1 2025 | 30 Jun 2024 |
| Round 2: 30 Sept to 4 Oct 2024 | semester 1 2025 | 22 Sept 2024 |
| Round 3: 2 to 3 Dec 2024 <i>(excluding Opera offered in round 2 only)</i> | semester 1 2025 | 30 Nov 2024 |

How to submit your audition application in Acceptd

How to submit your audition application in Acceptd:

1. Click 'Register audition' on the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (SCM) website. You will be taken to the audition portal Acceptd
2. Start your application by selecting the degree level, degree, and program (principal study area). Click 'Apply' then follow the guidelines outlined on the right-hand side
3. Sign-up to create a new account or use your Facebook account to sign-in
4. Complete the application form
5. Pay the audition fee and select your audition time in the relevant schedule or upload your audition materials.

Further detail

Instrumental / vocal performance applications

Live auditions will be held at the Conservatorium. You can schedule your audition time via your application in the audition portal Acceptd. If you cannot travel to the Conservatorium for a live audition, you may submit a video audition. You can do this by registering your details in the Acceptd portal and uploading your video file (see below).

Live Auditions

Live auditions will be held at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. You will be directed where to go once you have arrived and signed in for your audition. Please arrive approximately 30 minutes before your audition is scheduled. You will be offered a short warm-up period immediately prior to your audition. As your audition will be a performance, we suggest that you consider wearing appropriate on-stage attire for your study area.

Video Auditions

You can upload your audition file as an unlisted video to a video hosting service (such as YouTube or Youku or equivalent), then upload to your Acceptd registration. The file cannot be larger than 5GB and video types that you can upload are: MP4, M4V, AVI, FLV, MOV, WMV, MPG, MPEG, M2V, MKV, WEBM. As your audition will be a performance, we suggest that you consider wearing appropriate on-stage attire for your study area.

Official notifications regarding entry to the Sydney Conservatorium of Music will be sent upon receipt of your completed University of Sydney course application and audition registration

Preparing for your audition



Scan to view our video on 'How to prepare for a successful audition'

To study at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, you will need to audition or attend an interview. This can be a nerve-racking experience, but it doesn't have to be. An audition is your opportunity to show us your abilities, and it allows us to assess your skills and discuss your commitment. You can register for your audition or interview when our online audition portal **Accepted** opens for applications.

Here are four tips from those who've previously applied to help you prepare for your audition:

- 1. It's not what you play that counts, it's how you play**
When selecting repertoire, you want to play it comfortably and well. A piece that's achievable is better than going for something that's too difficult. The audition panel will look for quality of performance
- 2. Double check all of your audition requirements**
Make sure you follow the audition requirements for your specialisation. If you're auditioning on an orchestral instrument or voice, remember you need to have an accompanist
- 3. It all comes down to sound quality**
Whatever equipment you're using to record your audition, do your best to maximise the sound quality by choosing your location carefully. If you can, try and use an ensemble room or recital hall. It doesn't need to be recorded professionally – a simple ZOOM recording is enough
- 4. Show your personality**
An audition panel consists of musicians. Show them that you're one too and that you have a passion for music. Be technically proficient, but don't fret about technique – they'll be on the lookout for potential.

Find a Collaborative Pianist

If you are attending a live audition and your work requires accompaniment, you must provide your own collaborative pianist. If circumstances prevent you from attending a live audition, you may submit an audio-visual audition recording. While it is preferred that you play with an accompanist, there will be no disadvantage if you submit a recording of your unaccompanied performance. We will not accept the use of a recorded accompaniment.

If you do not already have one, and if you have registered for a live audition, the following information can assist you in finding an accompanist.

Sydney Conservatorium of Music collaborative pianists

Alan Hicks: alan.hicks@sydney.edu.au
Theresa Leung: theresa.leung@sydney.edu.au
Ingrid Sakurov: ingrid.sakurov@sydney.edu.au

Accompanists' Guild of NSW – Find an Accompanist:

<http://accompanistsguildofnsw.org.au/accompanists/>

Please note:

- Any arrangement for payment is solely between the applicant and collaborative pianist.
- The Sydney Conservatorium of Music is not responsible for any services and fees.
- This suggested list is optional only, and there is no requirement to engage with a collaborative pianist from the list provided.



Video Auditions

Table 3: How to record your audition

Table 3: How to record your audition

| Instrument | Recording Tips |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Brass | Do not point the bell directly towards the camera. |
| Violin & Viola | Face slightly to your left, to ensure the fingerboard is visible and not obstructed by a music stand. F Holes should point towards the camera. |
| Cello & Double Bass | Face slightly to your right, to ensure the fingerboard is visible and not obstructed by a music stand. |
| Guitar | Both hands visible and not obstructed by the music stand. |
| Harp | Face towards your right, to ensure both hands are visible. Foot pedals should also be visible. |
| Piano | Angle the camera to ensure the keyboard is not obstructed by your body and hands are visible. Please make sure your face and hands are both clearly visible. |
| Voice | Position the camera to take full length body. Clarity of voice must be heard. |
| Woodwind | Ensure your hands are visible and keys are not obstructed by a music stand. |
| Music Theatre | Singing: Refer to Voice above. Acting: Film from chest upwards, voice and facial expressions should be clearly visible. |

When using your smartphone or other devices to record your performance:

- Record in one continuous take, without cuts or edits. You may choose to record individual pieces or movements separately
- Place your recording device in a horizontal, i.e. 'landscape' position
- Remember that audio quality is more important than video quality
- Ensure the room you record in is well lit and quiet. Avoid bright side light or back light. The best location to film is usually with you facing a window
- Place your device on a tripod or makeshift stand, i.e. not handheld
- Check that Flight mode is turned on and Wireless is turned off, so you receive no calls or messages during the recording
- Note that while you can use recording software such as Adobe's Premiere Rush to record yourself, the standard Camera applications on iOS and Android devices are usually sufficient to obtain good quality results
- Make sure your camera is set to record at 720p HD at 30fps, if you are using an iPhone or an Android device. This is set in the Camera Settings within the Settings application. Recording at higher quality settings is not necessary for evaluation and will significantly impact the upload time of your final recording.

Keep in mind that it's the quality of your performance that matters most, not the quality of your recording.



Image: The Sydney Conservatorium of Music building



Performance coursework degrees

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

This degree is aimed at musicians who wish to enhance their mastery in music performance and to prepare for a career at the highest levels of the performance industry. Principal study areas include orchestral and solo instruments, historical performance, and jazz.

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

This course is designed to meet the needs of advanced graduates and young professional musicians who wish to extend their performance skills and knowledge in the context of current professional practice. This program may be taken in any of the Conservatorium's instrumental areas.

Master of Music Studies (Opera Performance)

The Master of Music Studies (Opera Performance) is designed to meet the needs of advanced graduates and young professional singers who wish to extend their performance skills and knowledge in the context of operatic repertoire and current professional practice.

The principal study area is Opera Performance.

Principal Study Areas - Performance

- Brass – Classical
- Collaborative Piano – Classical
- Organ – Classical
- Percussion – Classical
- Piano – Classical
- Strings – Classical
- Voice – Classical
- Woodwind – Classical
- Chinese Instrumental Performance
- Historical Performance
- Jazz Performance
- Opera Performance: *MMus Studies (Opera Performance) only*



The audition requirements for each principal study area are listed on the following pages. We suggest that, if possible, you discuss these requirements with your teacher prior to attending your audition.




Image: four students holding their instruments

Brass – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 50 minutes

We offer study in:

Horn

Trumpet

Trombone

Euphonium

Tuba

Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare a program presenting various styles and periods. This should include:

1. At least one major 19th or 20th-century concerto
2. One work originally written with piano accompaniment
3. One unaccompanied work
4. Two characteristic excerpts from the standard orchestral repertoire.

All works should be originally written for your instrument (no transcriptions or arrangements).

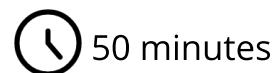
Note for Tuba candidates

Tuba candidates should demonstrate both the F or E \flat tuba and the CC or BB \flat tuba.

Organ – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)



Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare a well contrasted 50-minute recital program, which includes:

1. A major work of J.S. Bach
2. A major Romantic composition.


It is expected that you will perform the chosen works to a high level of excellence and will also display well-advanced console management skills.

Your proposed recital program should be submitted for approval to the Coordinator of Organ Studies, Philip Swanton – philip.swanton@sydney.edu.au – at least three months prior to the start of the semester in which you hope to commence postgraduate studies.

Percussion – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 50 minutes

Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare a 40 to 50-minute program that represents the area in percussion performance that you are intending to focus on.

Audition examples


1. If you plan to focus on the marimba, you should perform major works or concerti for marimba.
2. If you plan to focus on orchestral percussion, you should perform:
 - I. Orchestral excerpts on snare drum, timpani, mallet keyboards, aux percussion
 - II. A J.S. Bach transcription on marimba.

If you are interested in studying a wide range of repertoire, you should perform pieces reflecting this diversity: for example, works for mallet keyboards, timpani, and multiple percussion.

Piano – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 50 minutes

Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare the following program for your application:

Audition

- You are required to perform a 50-minute recital of freely chosen works which must include a major work of at least 15 minutes. Any complete major work of a minimum 15-minute duration by any composer will be acceptable.

All works should be performed from memory, except for complex contemporary works.

Sight reading / Short Study

- In addition to the 50-minute recital, you will be assessed in the following:

Live audition

- a sight-reading assessment.

Video audition


- a short study assessment.

You will be sent a short study upon receipt of your video audition registration and at least two weeks before the application deadline. You are required to prepare, record and upload the short study assessment prior to the program. The details of the short study and how to upload will be sent to your Accepted 'messages.'

Collaborative Piano – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 50 minutes

Audition Requirements for Performance Degrees

You are required to perform:

1. A work for solo piano with at least two contrasting movements or two different contrasting works
2. At least two contrasting art songs with a vocalist (the applicant to provide the vocalist)
3. At least two contrasting movements from a sonata with an instrumentalist (the applicant to provide the instrumentalist). This could include contrasting movements from two different sonatas.


You should also be prepared for:

- Sight reading with an associate artist (provided).
- Sight singing and reading simultaneously.

Strings – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 50 minutes

We offer study in:

Violin

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Harp

Audition Requirements

Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass

You are required to prepare a 50-minute program including:

1. A major sonata or concerto, or movements from either
2. A virtuoso piece
3. A movement of solo Bach

Guitar

You are required to perform a 40 to 50-minute program of contrasting works, including:

1. A 20th century sonata (complete, or one or more movements)
2. A work by J.S. Bach


Harp

You are required to perform a 50-minute recital of varied styles, including at least one major solo or concerto repertoire work, at the level of a senior undergraduate or final recital.

Voice – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 35 minutes

Audition Requirements

Audition

You are required to prepare a program comprising a 30-minute recital of advanced and varied works performed to a high level of excellence and exhibiting a variety of languages.

The audition would generally include a representation of the general art song repertoire.

All works should be performed from memory.


Interview

In an interview following the performance, a proposed plan of study will be discussed.

Note: you do not need to book a separate time for this interview.

Woodwind – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)
Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 30 minutes

We offer study in:

Bassoon

Clarinet

Flute

Oboe

Saxophone

Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare a 30-minute recital of advanced and varied works, performed to a high level of excellence.


Up to 15 minutes of this recital can be unaccompanied. The recital must include one major work from the repertoire.

If you would like more advice about appropriate repertoire choice, please contact the staff listed for your instrument [here](#).

Chinese Instrumental Performance

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 40-45 minutes

We offer study in:

- Erhu二胡 (two-string bowed fiddle)
- Daji打击 (Chinese percussion)
- Honghou箜篌 (Chinese Harp)
- Pipa琵琶 (four-string plucked lute)
- Yangqin扬琴 (hammered dulcimer)
- Sheng笙 (bamboo flute)
- Zheng古筝 (21-string zither)
- Zhongruan中阮 (lower-pitched four-string plucked lute)
- Zhudi竹笛 (horizontal bamboo flute)
- Other (e.g. tar, koto, biwa)

Audition Requirements


A 40 to 45-minute recital recording including one ensemble work (own choice) and three contrasting solo works (as specified below):

- One traditional solo piece
e.g. A flowery moonlit night by the Spring River
春江花月夜 *for pipa*
- One contemporary piece (after 1980s)
e.g. The Scenery of Tianshan Mountain 天山风情 *for erhu*
- One improvisational work
e.g. Innovate within the framework of tradition
(‘now avaran-e sonnati: bringing newness to tradition’) *for tar*

Historical Performance

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 50 minutes

We offer study in

Historical Performance Instrument:

String instruments: violin, viola, cello, viola da gamba, violone, bass

Plucked instruments: lute, theorbo, guitar, harp

Wind instruments: recorder, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, cornetto

Brass instruments: trumpet, horn, sackbut

Historical Performance Keyboard:

Harpsichord, chamberorgan, clavichord, fortepiano, 19th-century piano

Historical Performance Vocal:

All types

Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare a program of works totalling 50 minutes of material at the level of a senior undergraduate or final recital, demonstrating musical and technical excellence.


You are also required to have specialised accompaniment at the audition – clavichord, harpsichord, fortepiano, or nineteenth-century piano. Please specify your keyboard instrument for accompaniment in your audition application.

If you experience difficulties in obtaining an accompanist, you may contact [Dr Daniel Yeadon](#), Senior Lecturer in Historical Performance.

Jazz Performance

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 20 minutes

We offer study in:

Bass

Brass

Drums

Guitar

Piano

Vibraphone

Woodwind

Voice

Audition Requirements

Candidates are required to demonstrate Jazz Performance acumen by:

Playing/singing a jazz standard –

- 1 chorus melody; and
- 2 choruses improvisation

Playing/singing the chord type arpeggios off each scale degree of a major scale, for example:

- C major Scale: Cmaj9, Dm9, Em9, Fmaj9, G7, Am9, Bm9b5.
Two octaves ascending / descending in quavers
BPM100 (One octave for vocalists)

Playing/singing the chord type arpeggios off each scale degree of a melodic minor scale, for example:


- C melodic Minor Scale: Cmin9, Dm9, Ebmaj+9, F9, G+9, Am9b5, B7alt
Two octaves ascending / descending in quavers
BPM100 (One octave for vocalists)

Candidates are also required to write a brief description of their experience in –

- Performing jazz music, i.e. how many years playing jazz, large ensemble, small ensemble
- Writing jazz ensemble arrangements

Opera Performance

Master of Music Studies (Opera Performance)

 30 minutes

Audition Requirements

Audition

You are required to present a varied program of at least three arias at an advanced level of difficulty and to a high standard of excellence.

All pieces must be performed from memory.

Interview

Live audition

In an interview following your performance, a general discussion of your current experience and future goals will be explored. This interview does not have a separate booking time.

Video audition

You will be notified of the result of your video audition. Successful applicants will then be invited to attend a Zoom interview (approximately 15 minutes) for a general discussion of your current experience and future goals.

Contact Us



+61 2 9351 1222 (option 6)



con.apply@sydney.edu.au



sydney.edu.au/music



1 Conservatorium Rd, Sydney

(just off Macquarie Street – look for the castle)

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youtube.com/@sydneycon

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The University of Sydney reserves the right to make alterations to any information contained within this publication without notice.

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For more information
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